

VZCZCXRO1734
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK RUEHMOS
DE RUEHIHL #0090 1401759
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 201759Z MAY 06
FM REO HILLAH
TO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0618
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0632
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RUEHIHL/REO HILLAH 0683

C O N F I D E N T I A L HILLAH 000090

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 5/20/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KISL](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: MUQTADA AL-SADR THREATENS BOYCOTT OF PARLIAMENT MEMBERS WHO
DO NOT MEET HIS DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE TO IRAQ

CLASSIFIED BY: Thomas F. Cooney, A/DRC, REO Al Hillah,
Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (U) This is a SET Najaf cable.

12. (SBU) Summary: On May 19, the eve of the expected announcement of the newly formed national government, radical anti-American cleric Muqtada Al-Sadr issued a statement outlining his expectations for Iraq's Council of Representatives (CoR). Sadr noted that the Hawza (NOTE: this refers to the major religious schools in Iraq, such as that under Ayatollah Sistani. Sadr considers himself the head of one, although many Shi'a do not see him as possessing the requisite credentials) and what he termed "the invasion" were not allied. Calling for "unity, sovereignty and [the] independence of Iraq," Sadr warned the CoR that he would institute a boycott of any representative who was not working for the benefit of all Iraqis. He asserted that his threat of a boycott was not limited to non-Sadrists. Sadr explained that for Sadrist representatives who do not work for Iraqis, the boycott will be twice as intense. End summary.

13. (U) Begin text of Sadr's statement:

-- I shall stay and speak as a Hawza and refuge for the needy and the poor and the aggrieved people and among the young and the old. Nothing is above the truth.

-- We shall stay and defend aggrieved nations and we shall demand their rights. Their rights have been taken by unjust people and we and the invasion shall remain separated, as my father said, "The Hawza and the invasion are not one."

-- We shall continue rejecting all kinds of invasion and we shall not believe in it at all, because our enemy is God's enemy. We shall reject all the divisive actions, such as dividing the country or ethnic conflicts. We shall call always for unity, sovereignty, and the independence of Iraq, and restore the services for Iraqi people.

-- Therefore, everyone, especially the people in the parliament, have to work for similar interests and perform their duties because they have achieved these positions in order to serve the people and the public interest, not their own interests.

-- So, I announce from here that anyone who fails to serve the people or the national government is responsible to God and we shall boycott him for good. I exclude no one (this is for Shi'a, Sunni and Kurds) and you might think that I would exclude the Sadrist stream (NOTE: this refers to followers of Muqtada and his father), but if they fail to serve the people, they shall receive twice the boycott.

-- I choose no sides. I always say the truth, even about myself, and by peaceful means, such as the peaceful protests and

condemnations as you have seen from us.

End text of statement.

14. (C) Comment: In recent months, Muqtada Al-Sadr has rarely let a national event pass without making his point of view publicly known. The threatened boycott may not mean much to individual Sunni and Kurdish legislators, but they likely fear Sadr's large and active Mahdi Militia. However, it is unclear what Sadr means by "boycott." With this statement, Sadr goals seems to be to keep himself in the spotlight and demonstrate his influence as a major political player as the new national government gets on its feet. End comment.

MEURS